

Message Text

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ACTION PM-05

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 MCT-02 ACDA-12 TRSE-00 OMB-01

EB-08 COME-00 HA-05 IO-13 CIAE-00 H-01 INR-10

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11

OES-09 DLOS-09 DOE-15 SOE-02 AID-05 /147 W

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R 191308Z JUL 78

FM AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0792

INFO SECDEF WASHDC

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GE

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: MASS, MPOL, EI

SUBJECT: SECURITY ASSISTANCE

REFS: A) STATE 167901; B) STATE 22926; C) 77 DUBLIN 2836

1. THE FOLLOWING RESPONSES ARE KEYED TO SUB-HEADINGS
OF REF A, PARA 3.

A. 1 AND 2. THE SMALL FMS PROGRAM FOR IRELAND RELATES
DIRECTLY TO US FOREIGN POLICY VIS-A-VIS IRELAND.

MAINTENANCE OF A STABLE, WESTERN-ORIENTED, DEMOCRATIC
GOVERNMENT IS A KEY OBJECTIVE. THE PRIMARY-MISSION OF
THE IRISH SECURITY FORCES, AND THUS THE PRIMARY USE OF US-
SUPPLIED EQUIPMENT AND TRAINING, IS

COMBATTING SUBVERSION AND ANTI-DEMOCRATIC TERRORISM,
MOSTLY FROM THE PROVISIONAL IRA. A SECOND MAJOR MISSION
FOR THE IRISH FORCES IS IN PROVIDING OFFICERS AND MEN
FOR U.N. PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS, WHICH IS IN THE U.S.

NATIONAL INTEREST. SOME EMPHASIS IS BEING PLACED ON
ENLARGING AND IMPROVING A VERY SMALL FISHERIES' PROTECTION

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FORCE, GIVEN THE RECENT INCREASE IN TERRITORIAL WATERS.

US FISHING INTERESTS ARE NOT INVOLVED IN IRISH WATERS
AND CONSERVATION OF STOCKS IS CONSONANT WITH OUR
GENERAL NATIONAL INTEREST.

3. NOT APPLICABLE.

4. GOI BELIEVES THAT COUNTRY'S REQUIREMENTS CALL FOR AN EFFECTIVE INFANTRY FORCE WITH MODEST FIRE SUPPORT CAPABILITY FROM ARTILLERY, ARMY, AIR AND NAVY, INCLUDING A SMALL AIR AND SEA FISHERIES PROTECTION FORCE.

5. SINCE THE U.S. AND IRELAND DO NOT PARTICIPATE IN ANY MILITARY ALLIANCE THE FORCE DOES NOT HAVE MUCH DIRECT SIGNIFICANCE FOR U.S. INTERESTS. IRELAND'S WILLINGNESS TO PARTICIPATE IN THE PEACE-KEEPING ROLE WITHIN U.N. HAS BEEN AN ACTIVE AND POSITIVE ONE. ALTHOUGH IRELAND IS NOT A MEMBER OF NATO, WE NOTE THAT GOI SPOKESMEN HAVE PUBLICLY REFERRED TO AN UNDEFINED RESPONSIBILITY TO ITS EEC PARTNERS IF THEY SHOULD BE ATTACKED.

6. THE 1978 BUDGET SET IRISH DEFENCE SPENDING AT 100 MILLION POUNDS. THUS DEFENSE EXPENDITURES ARE EXPECTED TO REACH ABOUT FOUR PERCENT OF THE TOTAL CENTRAL GOVERNMENT BUDGET AND LESS THAN TWO PERCENT OF GNP. FIGURES ON MILITARY IMPORTS ARE NOT READILY AVAILABLE BUT THEY WOULD CONSTITUTE A MINISCULE PORTION OF TOTAL IMPORTS. IRELAND HAS A HEAVY RELIANCE ON IMPORTED CAPITAL GOODS AND FUEL AS WELL AS A GROWING DEMAND FOR IMPORTED CONSUMER GOODS BROUGHT ON BY INCREASED DISPOSABLE INCOME. THE GOVERNMENT IS CONCERNED ABOUT THE LONGER-TERM PROSPECTS FOR THE BALANCE OF PAYMENTS, AND IS PARTICULARLY WATCHFUL OF EXTERNAL DEBT SERVICE OBLIGATIONS. BUT RESERVES CURRENTLY STAND AT A HEALTHY LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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LEVEL, AND HEAVY REPAYMENT OBLIGATIONS WHICH WERE TO ACCRUE OVER THE NEXT FEW YEARS HAVE BEEN RELIEVED BY REFINANCING. IT DOES NOT APPEAR PROBABLE THAT THE BALANCE OF PAYMENTS WILL IMPOSE SERIOUS CONSTRAINTS ON THE ECONOMY IN THE NEXT FEW YEARS.

7. IN THE PAST SEVERAL YEARS IRELAND HAS BEEN EXPENDING ROUGHLY 500,000 DOLLARS PER YEAR FOR COMMUNICATIONS EQUIPMENT AND MILITARY TRAINING IN THE U.S. LONG TERM DEFENCE SPENDING PROJECTIONS ARE NOT HEAVILY EMPHASIZED, AND EVEN PLANS FOR FY 1979 HAVE NOT YET BEEN FORMULATED.

8. COMMUNICATIONS EQUIPMENT PROCUREMENT IS TO UPGRADE FIELD COMMUNICATIONS, TO REPLACE OBSOLETE EQUIPMENT AND HAVE A READY SUPPLY OF SPARE PARTS. GOI NORMALLY ACQUIRES TWO TRAINING SPACES PER YEAR IN THE U.S. THIS IS AN INTEGRAL PART OF OFFICER DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM.

9. MILITARY PROCUREMENT FROM THE U.S. IS SO LIMITED IN SCOPE THAT ITS IMPACT ON THE IRISH ECONOMY IS INSIGNIFICANT.

10. THE OVERALL ARMS CONTROL IMPACT IS MINIMAL.
11. THE VERY LIMITED PROCUREMENT ENVISIONED FROM
U.S. SOURCES SHOULD IN NO WAY AFFECT IRELAND'S FAVORABLE
HUMAN RIGHTS RECORD OR CONFLICT WITH US HUMAN RIGHTS
OBJECTIVES (FOR DETAILS OF IRISH PERFORMANCE ON HUMAN
RIGHTS SEE REF B.).

12. IRELAND RECEIVES MODEST ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE THROUGH
ITS STATUS AS ONE OF THE LEAST DEVELOPED MEMBERS
OF THE EEC VIA THE REGIONAL, SOCIAL AND OTHER FUNDS. IN
1977 TRANSFERS FROM THE EEC EXCEEDED 200 MILLION POUNDS.

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ACCORDING TO CENTRAL BANK STATISTICS OUTSTANDING REPAY-
MENT OF ASSISTANCE RELATED LOANS AS OF MARCH 1978 STOOD
AT 167 MILLION POUNDS - EEC; 100 MILLION POUNDS -
EUROPEAN INVESTMENT BANK; 27 MILLION POUNDS FROM U.S.
UNDER MARSHALL AID PROGRAM; AND 50 MILLION POUNDS - OTHER
INCLUDING IBRD. WE ARE UNAWARE OF ANY GRANT MILITARY
ASSISTANCE. IN TERMS OF CASH PROCUREMENT IN ADDITION TO
THE SMALL SCALE PURCHASES FROM THE U.S., THE GOI PLANS
TO BUY FROM EXTERNAL SOURCES 5 SCORPION TANKS (UK), A
LIMITED NUMBER OF WHEELED MILITARY VEHICLES AS
REPLACEMENTS (UK) AND INTENDS TO LEASE AN ADDITIONAL
FISHERIES PROTECTION VESSEL AND ONE MORE FISHERY
SURVEILLANCE AIRCRAFT.

13. IRELAND DOES PURCHASE A SMALL AMOUNT OF EQUIPMENT

ANNUALLY FROM THE U.S. ON COMMERCIAL TERMS. WE DO NOT
PROVIDE ASSISTANCE UNDER MAP, FMS FINANCING OR IMET AT
PRESENT, NOR IS IRISH INCLUSION IN SUCH A PROGRAM
ENVISIONED IN THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE. SHANNON

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